

CASE STUDY
1200 GRANDVIEW AVENUE
Grandview Heights, Ohio

Project Type: Mixed Use Redevelopment
Developer: Santer Communities



Project Profile

The project is a three story structure, containing eight (8) residential condominiums, four on each of floors two and three, plus one office suite of 1,446 square feet, and an enclosed parking garage for 19 automobiles on the ground floor. The office space is located to the front, next to the public entrance to the elevator lobby for access to the residential units. Garage access is from the alley in the rear of the building.

The plans of the residential units vary in size from 1,537 to 2,258 square feet. Three different plans are provided. Each unit has two bedrooms, and an outdoor balcony. Two parking spaces are assigned to each residence.

All utility services are under ground. Trash receptacles are enclosed in the garage portion of the building, with separate access from the rear alley. A roof top garden is provided for use by residents and their guests to enjoy views of street life and activities along Grandview Avenue.



Site

Two parcels of land, fronting the east side of Grandview Avenue were acquired for the project. One parcel contained a parking lot, and the other contained a single story doctor's office building that had been vacant for several years. The two parcels combined measured 80 feet by 100 feet.

Development Approval Issues

The project site and all adjoining sites were zoned for C-1 uses in Grandview Heights. All of the neighboring buildings were houses occupied by commercial or offices uses. The house to the south of the proposed development contained a photography studio, and was considered an historic structure, having been one of the first houses built in the community. Even though the proposal would replace the only commercial building and parking lot in the block, the development was considered to be out of scale with the neighboring buildings and the residential neighborhood across the rear alley.

The developer's original submission proposed 10, two bedroom residential units, with enclosed parking for 20 cars occupying the entire ground floor, except for a lobby entrance for residents and guests. The developer thought that his proposal would require no variances for parking, but it would require variances for rear yard setback, ground coverage, and building height. He would also require a conditional use approval for residential development within the C-1 commercial district.

Other issues rose during planning commission reviews and public hearings, including an expected increase of traffic, the narrow width of the rear alley, housing unit density, and selection of building façade materials. Planning Commission members expressed a preference to provide office or retail space along the Grandview Avenue frontage, instead of a ground floor live/ work apartment. The City recognized limitations of its zoning ordinances in dealing with mixed use projects, and suggested that if both the Planning Commission and the Council would wave the minimum lot size restriction for Planned Community District zoning, then the developer could seek re-zoning to the PCD District and would need no variances.

The developer obtained the PCD zoning, moved the structure closer to Grandview Avenue, providing a setback of 12 feet. The developer changed the building plan to provide office space and parking on the ground floor, and reduced unit count to eight. The developer also provided a 2 foot easement in the rear to allow future alley widening if necessary. The entire review and approval process for the development required eleven months.

This case study was prepared in reference to the Minutes of the Grandview Heights Planning Commission, dated June 15, 2005, June 29, 2005, July 20, 2005, August 17, 2005, September 21, 2005, and May 17, 2006.